

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 OES-07 DLOS-09 CG-00 DOTE-00 EB-08

COME-00 TRSE-00 OMB-01 ACDA-12 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-05 H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 INT-05 DOE-15 SOE-02 NRC-05

/130 W

-----087981 231839Z /46

R 230800Z MAY 78

FM AMCONSUL NAHA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2647

INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO

AMEMBASSY SEOUL

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMCONSUL HONG KONG

USLO PEKING

CINCPAC CAMP SMITH HAWAII

COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AFB

COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA

OAC CAMP BUTLER

COMFLEACTS OKINAWA

COMSEVENTH FLEET, YOKOSUKA

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAHA 215

CINCPAC ALSO FOR POLAD

E. O. 11652. N/A

TAGS. PBOR, EFIS, JA, CH

SUBJ. SENKAKUS SITREP-MAY 22

REF. NAHA 195 DTG 090800Z MAY 78

1. SUMMARY. NO CHINESE FISHING VESSELS HAVE BEEN SEEN IN SENKAKUS AREA SINCE MAY 14, BUT SOME VESSELS ARE BELIEVED STILL OPERATING IN AREAS WEST OF 123 DEGREES EAST. VICE GOVERNOR YABU, UPON RETURN
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FROM RECENT TRIP TO PEKING, TOLD PRESS THAT CHINESE LEADERS RE-ITERATED PREVIOUS LINE THAT FISHING FLEET INCURSION WAS "ACCIDENTIAL"

NEVERTHELESS, OKINAWA PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT BELIEVES PRIVATELY THAT CHINESE INCURSION WAS CALCULATED POLITICAL MOVE TO REASSERT MINERAL CLAIMS IN SENKAKUS. END SUMMARY.

2. ACCORDING TO LOCAL MARITIME SAFETY AGENCY SOURCE, CHINESE FISHING

FLEET HAS, SINCE MAY 14, WITHDRAWN FROM MSA SURVEILLANCE AREA IN THE SENKAKUS, I.E. 32 MILE RADIUS FROM UOTSURI JIMA. SOURCE SAID, HOWEVER, THAT MSA PATROL SHIPS AND AIRCRAFT WILL CONTINUE SURVEILLANCE

FOR TIME BEING SINCE SEVERAL CHINESE FISHING VESSELS ARE BELIEVED STILL OPERATING IN AREA WEST OF 123 DEGREES EAST.

3. VICE GOVERNOR YABU, HEAD OF 97 MEMBER FRIENDSHIP MISSION WHICH JUST RETURNED FROM TEN-DAY VISIT TO CHINA, TOLD PRESS MAY 20 THAT FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT CHU TU-NAN REITERATED PREVIOUS LINE THAT FISHING FLEET INCURSION IN THE SENKAKUS WAS "COMPLETELY

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ACCIDENTAL" AND THAT THE SENKAKUS TERRITORIAL ISSUE WAS BEING SHELVED FOR THE TIME BEING. ACCORDING TO YABU, CHU DENOUNCED ATTEMPTS BY "A GROUP IN JAPAN" TO DELAY PFT NEGOTIATIONS BY BRINGING UP SENKAKUS ISSUE, AND ADDED THAT ISSUE WAS NOT SOMETHING THAT WILL HARM RELATIONS BETWEEN CHINA AND JAPAN.

4. DESPITE YABU'S REPORT TO PRESS, LEFTIST-DOMINATED OKINAWA PREFECTURAL GOVERNMENT (OPG) SEEMS TO HOLD A REALISTIC PRIVATE VIEW OF CHINESE INTENTIONS IN THE SENKAKUS. IN AN EXTENDED DISCUSSION WITH CONGENOFF MAY 22, TSUNEMORI GIMA, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF OPG LIAISON DEPT AND GOV TAIRA'S CONFIDANT, SAID THAT THERE WAS NO ONE IN THE OPG WHO BELIEVED THE CHINESE INCURSION WAS ACCIDENTAL. STATING THAT NOTHING HAPPENS BY ACCIDENT IN CHINESE INTER-CONFIDENTIAL

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NATIONAL OPERATIONS, HE SAID THAT SIZE OF THE FISHING FLEET, ITS MAKEUP OF SHIPS FROM PORTS ALL ALONG CHINA COAST, AND SOPHISTICATED ENCRYPTION SYSTEM USED BY SHIPS IN COMMUNICATING WITH ONE ANOTHER AND WITH HOMEPORTS--ALL ARGUE IN FAVOR OF DELIBERATE NATURE OF THE INCURSION.

5. MOREOVER, CHINESE FLEET COULD NOT HAVE COME TO THE SENKAKUS FOR ECONOMIC REASONS, ACCORDING TO GIMA. THE SHIPS WERE HARDLY ENGAGED IN FISHING, AND IN ANY EVENT NO ONE IN OKINAWA HAS EVER

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CONCEIVED OF FISHING GROUNDS THERE AS SITE FOR 200 SHIP OPERATION.

6. THE CHINESE, THEREFORE, MUST HAVE SENT IN THE FLEET FOR A PURELY POLITICAL PURPOSE-- TO REASSERT CHINESE OIL AND MINERAL CLAIMS TO THE CONTINENTAL SHELF INCLUDING THE SENKAKUS, GIMA SAID. THEY MUST HAVE PREFERRED NOT TO DO THIS PRIOR TO CONCLUSION OF THE PFT, BUT WERE COMPELLED TO MOVE IN SUFFICIENT FORCE IN THE FACE OF CLAIMS TO THE SENKAKUS ASSERTED BY LDP PRO-TAIWAN ELEMENTS TO BLOCK PFT NEGOTIATIONS. OTHERWISE, CHINESE WOULD HAVE WEAKENED THEIR CLAIM BY DEFAULT. HAVING MADE THEIR POINT, BEFORE RESUMPTION OF

PFT NEGOTIATIONS, THAT THE SENKAKUS REMAINS AN OPEN ISSUE, THE CHINESE

SAW FIT TO WITHDRAW THEIR CHIPS, EVEN IF TEMPORARILY. DEPUTY
PREMIER TENG HSIAO-PING'S REMARKS TO VISITING UPI EDITORS IN PEKING
(REPORTED MAY 21) TO EFFECT THAT CHINA DOES NOT RECOGNIZE GOJ
"REQUEST" CONCERNING THE SENKAKUS CLEARLY SHOW THAT THE CHINESE
WILL BE TOUGH CUSTOMERS ON THE ISSUE AFTER PFT IS OUT OF THE WAY,
HE SAID.

7. COMMENT. BELIEVE GIMA'S VIEW REPRESENTS THAT OF THE OPG TOP-
ECHELON. IT IS BASED ON TALKS WITH YABU AND OTHER MEMBERS OF HIS
MISSION, AND MAY REPRESENT OPG'S BEST EFFORTS TO FIND PLAUSIBLE
EXPLANATION FOR CHINESE MOTIVES.

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DECONTROLLED AFTER ONE YEAR.
KNOWLES

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